



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health and Family Services

Jim Doyle, Governor
Helene Nelson, Secretary

EMBARGOED UNTIL NOON - OCTOBER 5, 2005
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Governor Doyle Proclaims October 15th White Cane Safety Day

Governor Jim Doyle has proclaimed October 15th as “White Cane Safety Day” in Wisconsin to raise awareness about pedestrians who are blind and visually impaired.

“While most drivers are respectful of pedestrians using white canes or dog guides, too often motorists put these pedestrians in dangerous situations,” said Governor Doyle. “Everyone who drives in Wisconsin should be keenly aware of pedestrians who are blind or visually impaired, not just on October 15th, but every day of the year.”

People who are blind or visually impaired can be identified by a cane or walking stick which is white in color or white trimmed with red that is held in an extended or raised position. Dog guides are another indicator. There are 200,000 individuals who are blind or visually impaired in the state.

Wisconsin law requires drivers to stop at least 10 feet from a pedestrian carrying a white cane or using a dog guide, who is attempting to cross a street, even if the person may be violating any of the laws applicable to pedestrians.

“The white cane and the dog guide are symbols of freedom and independence for blind people. We are asking motorists to be observant, and to obey Wisconsin’s White Cane Law,” says David Hyde, Chair of the Council on Blindness.

For more information, go to <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/blind/> or contact:

- Alumni Association for the Wisconsin School for the Visually Handicapped
608-752-0139
- Association for Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired
877-492-2708
- Badger Association of the Blind and Visually Impaired – Milwaukee
877-258-9200
- Department of Health and Family Services - Office for the Blind and Visually Impaired
888-879-0017
- Statutory Council on Blindness
888-879-0017
- National Federation of the Blind of Wisconsin
608-758-4800
- Wisconsin Council of the Blind
800-783-5213

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